

John Burchard “Spirit of Collaboration” Award

This award, established in 2003 by the 1st Vermont Collaboration Conference on Children, Youth & Families planning committee, recognizes Vermonters who best exemplify the “Spirit of Collaboration” on behalf of children, youth and families. The first award was presented to John D. Burchard, Ph.D., in honor of his lifelong commitment to improving the lives of families in Vermont and throughout the United States. His research on wraparound is still considered landmark. John passed away a few months after receiving his award and the 2004 Collaboration Conference Planning Committee renamed the award to honor John’s memory.

Nominees must be an individual or team who:

- has contributed substantial long-term services to his/her community or the State of Vermont; and
- whose work is characterized by collaboration among community stakeholders; and
- whose work has resulted in benefits to children, youth and families

Past Recipients

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| 2003 | John Burchard, The University of Vermont |
| 2004 | Phil Wells, Washington County Mental Health Services |
| 2005 | John Pierce, VT Department of Mental Health |
| 2006 | Polly Nichol, VT Housing & Conservation Board |
| 2007 | Brenda Bean, VT Department for Children & Families |

John Burchard "Spirit of Collaboration" Award 2007 Nominees
Comments from Nominators

1. Nominee: **Brenda Bean, Vermont Early Child Development Division (DCF)**

- initiated CUPS program, ACCESS grant in the 1990's
- always developing programs, writing proposal, searching for funds collaboratively to establish and support VT Early Childhood and Family Mental Health
- always available to seek out information and to assist anyone who contacts her
- one of those people whose name comes up over and over again as a resource...because she's clear thinking, knowledgeable and someone who makes things happen
- her ability to take feedback and turn it into a plan for action...is legendary
- helping 'front line' workers get what they need to continue the work we feel is crucial for families"
- lovely person to work with...smart, kind, humble, flexible and funny
- often able to "see the forest for the trees"
- quietly passionate.....a tireless advocate and collaborator

2. Co-Nominees: **Wanda Audette, Director of Adoption @ The Lund Family Center and Diane Dexter, Adoption Unit Coordinator, Department for Children & Families**

- with implementation of Project Family grant...600 (foster)children have found permanent homes and families through the project Wanda and Diane lead
- in 2003, Lund Family Center's adoption program received a National Adoption Excellence Award from the US Department of Health and Human Services
- ongoing project between DCF and Lund Family Center
- outside independent evaluation conducted by Boston College School of Social Work...included consumer and provider feedback
- overwhelming positive statements provided by parents and adoption social workers
- * their work is an excellent example of how systems can be changed to address the needs of children who are free for adoption
- * state licensing report from 2004 stated; "the partnership between public and private agencies is quite an impressive model"
- before Project Family, many people believed that some children were 'unadoptable.' Diane and Wanda believe there are no unadoptable children, just unfound families

3. Nominee: **Jan Lee Rossier, Director of Northeast Kingdom Community Action Parent Child Center-South and NEKCA's Lincoln Center facility in St. Johnsbury**

- 'ultimate collaborator'...oversees programs for emergency housing, welfare to work activities and educational services for non-traditional students...all which require collaboration with both official and unofficial partners
- emergency housing case in point - Jan maintains a network to help disadvantaged families find shelter. These relationships are built on trust and mutual dedication

- to the cause of preventing homelessness, especially for families with children and teens who have not had an encouraging start to their adulthood
- since services for teen parents, dropouts and other non-traditional students are fragmented, Jan assembles the right services to help youth succeed in education instead of becoming involved in crime, substance abuse or other undesirable ends. Jan negotiates bits and pieces of funding...in order to achieve their ultimate goal of graduation.
 - a master organizer - does what it takes to succeed
 - Lincoln Center...a hotbed of new ideas on how to serve the low income people and families of the area. Jan oversees this extraordinary place and is primarily responsible for its vitality.